

**REMARKS**

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 15, 17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31 and 33-41 are now pending in this application. Claims 15, 19, 21, 23, 25, 31, 33 and 35 are independent. By this Amendment, Claims 15, 17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27, 31 and 33-35 are amended, Claim 41 is added, and Claims 16, 18, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Further, the specification is amended to correct a minor informality. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that Claims 16, 18, 21, 22, 24-26, 28-30, 32, 33 and 35-39 recite allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten to be in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 21, 25, 33 and 35 are rewritten to be in independent form and recite the features of their respective base claim. Thus, independent Claims 21, 25, 33 and 35 are allowable. Dependent Claims 29, 36-39 and 41 are allowable at least by virtue of their respective dependence from the allowable independent claims. Applicants submit that the remaining claims are allowable for at least the reasons set forth below.

The Office Action objects to the specification because of a minor informality. The specification is amended to obviate the objection. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of canceled Claims 16, 18, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is moot.

Independent Claim 31 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,129,725 to Ishizuka et al. ("Ishizuka"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 31 is amended to define that the first detecting apparatus comprises a contact-type sensor, and that the first detecting apparatus contacts a first to-be-detected portion to detect an amount of rotation of the wire reel.

The Office Action acknowledges that Ishizuka fails to disclose such a contact-type sensor. Thus, independent Claim 31 is patentable over Ishizuka for at least this reason. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection of independent Claim 31 is respectfully requested.

The first detecting apparatus comprising a contact-type sensor was previously recited in dependent Claim 34. The Office Action rejects Claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ishizuka in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,279,336 to Kusakari et al. ("Kusakari"). The Office Action takes the position that Kusakari discloses the claimed contact-type sensor (see bottom of page 7 of the Office Action). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Kusakari discloses a wire binder that includes a wire supplying sensor 18 for detecting a predetermined number of rotations of a wire supplying roller 8 (see Fig. 1 and col. 11, lines 53-55 of Kusakari). The Office Action asserts that the wire supplying sensor 18 is a contact-type sensor as defined in independent Claim 31. However, Kusakari discloses that the wire supplying sensor 18 "consists of a magnet 18 fixedly secured to the outer surface of an output shaft of the wire supplying motor 7a and a hole element 18b disposed on the housing side 1" (col. 11, lines 56-60 of Kusakari). The wire supplying sensor 18 (i.e., magnet) does not **contact** the wire supplying roller 8 to detect an amount of rotation of the wire supplying roller 8. Thus,

the wire supplying sensor 18 is not a **contact-type sensor** as defined in independent Claim 31. Accordingly, the combination of Ishizuka and Kusakari does not disclose or suggest the Claim 31 method, including detecting the first to-be-detected portion with a first detecting apparatus comprising a contact-type sensor to detect an amount of rotation of the wire reel, wherein the first detecting apparatus contacts a first to-be-detected portion, as recited in independent Claim 31. Thus, the current version of independent Claim 31 is patentable over the combination of Ishizuka and Kusakari for at least this reason.

The Office Action rejects independent Claims 15, 19 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Ishizuka and U.S. Patent No. 5,515,887 to Hanagasaki et al. ("Hanagasaki"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Each of independent Claims 15, 19 and 23 define, *inter alia*, that the first detecting apparatus comprises a contact-type sensor which contacts at least one first to-be-detected portion provided on a wire reel to detect an amount of rotation of the wire reel.

The Office Action acknowledges that the combination of Ishizuka and Hanagasaki fails to disclose the claimed contact-type sensor. Thus, independent Claims 15, 19 and 23 are patentable over the combination of Ishizuka and Hanagasaki for at least this reason. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The first detecting apparatus comprising a contact-type sensor was previously recited in dependent Claims 17, 20 and 27. The Office Action rejects Claims 17, 20 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ishizuka and Hanagasaki in view of Kusakari. However, Kusakari also fails to disclose the claimed contact-type sensor as

discussed above. Therefore, independent Claims 15, 19 and 23 also are patentable over the combination of Ishizuka, Hanagasaki and Kusakari for at least this reason. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of independent Claims 15, 19 and 23 is respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims 17, 20, 27 and 40 are patentable over the applied references at least by virtue of their respective dependence to the patentable independent claims. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in these dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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